This is our VVRC REPEATER print version An online version is available by free subscription http://vacavalleyradio.net

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER

December 2011

President's Message

By Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX

Many greetings and happy holidays to everyone in the Vaca Valley Radio Club! It is my pleasured to be your 2012 club president and I look forward to serving our club well throughout 2012.

Thanks to everyone that participated in the 2011 Merriment on Main event. This event is an opportunity for our club to make an impact on what amateur radio can do to support our community. Great job everyone!

Don't forget our December Holiday Meeting over at King's Buffet on Orange Avenue near the DMV this coming Wednesday night.. We always have a good time.

One of our club members Walter Hampton, WB6JTJ is having some health problems. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers this month. Walter has a new antenna set up for both VHF/UHF and HF which seems to work pretty well. If anyone has any suggestions on how to work around the U-verse system without creating TVI, let me know.

Please keep in mind we renew our club membership in January each year. It is also a time to renew ARRL membership at a discount. If you have never been an ARRL member, the first time membership through the club is substantial.

I look forward to seeing you at our Holiday meeting and working with you throughout the New Year. 73!

IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the President……1
November Meeting Minutes……1
2011 Merriment on Main ……1
10 Meter Contest……..2
2011 Club Officers……2
Around the Shack……..2
Ham Radio Hollywood……..3
LoTW Problems……4
Amsat……..4
Christmas Island Craps……..5
Membership Application……..5

November Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by club acting president Marcus Maclean at 7:07PM. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as submitted. The Treasury report was approved as submitted.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Merriment on Main sign up and update. Everything is set for MM. Same band plan as years past. 147.51Ø MHz simplex will be our working frequency. Check in at HQ begins at 5PM with operations continuing through 9PM. Assignments will be handed out as members show up.

The winner of the 50/50 $20.00 drawing was Larry W6OMF. Woohoo! Larry donated the proceeds to the repeater fund.

The holiday meeting is set and will meet at King's Buffet on Orange Avenue in Vacaville, Wednesday, December 14 at 6pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38PM

2011 Merriment on Main

By Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

It was a cloudless and clear afternoon as thousands gathered in downtown Vacaville in anticipation of the evening's festivities. Streets had been closed off to vehicular traffic and several organizations began setting up booths to provide coffee, hot chocolate, cookies and other festive treats to the gathering crowd.

Members of the Vaca Valley Radio Club helped keep it a fun filled event by mingling with the crowd and answering their questions. They were also prepared to help unite kids who had become separated from their parents, but for the first time in many years parents and kids stayed together.

The event went off without a hitch. VVRC was well represented and provide a community service to Vacaville.

2011 ARRL 10 Meter Contest

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

The bands are wide open. If you had a Technician Class license and wanted to work a really fun and easy contest this is it. DX was everywhere.

I only worked nine stations Friday night when I got home from work. As open as 10 meters is right now, it still closes at night.

I worked the contest CW on and off all weekend. I think the longest stretch I sat down at the radio was one hour. December is a busy month on weekends so I can't plant my behind in a chair all weekend.

Between raking leaves, erecting and decorating a Christmas Tree, and moving furniture so a contractor could do a ceiling repair (ask me about that) I was able to log 401 contacts, 66 multipliers, for a claimed score of 105,864.

For me that's a personal record. I have no doubt just about everyone that worked this contest this year achieved a personal record of some kind. 10 meters is a wide band, there is lots of room to spread out. I had a hard time at times finding an opening to start a CW run. When I searched and pounced I worked from 20,028 MHz up to 28,200 MHz with stations butted right up against each other.

I did not work stations in SD, WY, ID, MT, NV, DC, or several Canadian provinces. I worked east of the Mississippi very easily from the Caribbean north to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. I'm sure my signal was skipping over the near states and coming down somewhere in Kansas. Oh well, what can you do? It's 10 meters!

I used my Kenwood TS-450SAT which is my back-up radio used primarily for Field Day and the California QSO Party as a field radio, but I wanted to use it here because I've installed all the roofing filters in it. Those filters made a big difference with such a crowded band. I want to sell my Kenwood TS-570D anyway.

I worked several South American and Central American stations and a few Western Pacific stations. I did not hear any stations in EU or Central Asia. From reading the NCCC cluster nobody else heard those regions either.

This was a good one for sure. Maybe next year I'll work Phone only and see what happens.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2010

ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX
Vice President: Vacant
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Glen Mitchell W6JLX

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Open
Activities Chairperson: Vice President
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

2012 Club Officers

The 2012 club officers have been elected. They are:

President: Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX
Vice President: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Secretary: Jerry Olive KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt K6HEW

Board of Directors

Skip Lawson AF6HC
Richard Craig, KJ6MIB
Antonio Del Rio N6ZGB
Tom Christman KE6MDM

Around the Shack

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

The interior remodeling project is complete. The ceilings, walls and floors have all been demolished, replaced, textured or resurfaced, and painted with several coats of primer and paint. We started moving in the furniture last week.

When I reassembled my station I decided to install my back up radio the Kenwood TS-450SAT that I use for Field Day and the California QSO Party. My intent is now to sell my primary radio the Kenwood TS-570D and use that cash toward a new Kenwood TS-590S when the time comes.

Everything went back together pretty well; I labeled all my connectors and thoroughly cleaned everything as I reassembled it. Everything that was behind my workstation was filthy and needed to be wiped town a couple of times.

I had a few glitches though. I couldn't find my USB CAT Cable connector that goes from the radio to the computer so I had to buy a new one and the power cord that goes from the power supply to the radio has a loose wire in it so the radio cuts out in the middle of a nice CW QSO. I'll have to look it over tomorrow night when I'm sitting around a hotel room watching TV. I can imagine it now over breakfast with my colleagues, "Well Jerry what did you do last night?" "Gee, I watched some damn thing on TV but spent an hour doing continuity checks on a wiring harness and rewrapping it with new electrical tape!" As the table of insurance agents falls asleep face first into their morning oatmeal…

I had some trouble making my radio work with the computer. I had to open the manual to figure out what the baud rate was for the rig control feature on the 450. I discovered that information is not listed in the manual. Spending about 20 minutes changing comm ports and trying different baud rates I fiddled with it until I got a response from my computer. I ended up on comm port 6 and a baud rate of 4,800. Not being in the manual anywhere, I penciled it into the manual on page 89 near the description of how to set up rig control using the IF-232 interface device is listed.

You will discover with any radio manual some things are missing. When you find something like that make sure you write it down because eventually you will need that information again. I also discovered via a Google search that this radio like many other radios had a hidden menu not listed in the owner's manual.

I want to mention 10 meters here. OMG, 10 meters is so wide open a horse could walk through it. I worked E51MAN Bill Vanderheide, his home call is N7OU and live in Portland, OR. The guy goes to the Cook Islands this time of year and is currently on Manihiki, in the North Cook Islands. I worked him today (04 Dec 2011) with one watt into a vertical antenna CW and he immediately answered me. That's over 4,000 miles short path.

I'm going to try my hand at selling stuff on eBay. I may start small to make sure I have the procedure down then list my radio. I'll let you know how it goes. 73!

Amateur Radio Fun Facts

- Amateur Radio is the oldest radio service
- Anyone can become an amateur radio operator
- Hams contact other hams around the world

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Ham Radio in Hollywood: Comedian Tim Allen Stars as Radio Amateur on New TV Show

Tim Allen -- star of ***Home Improvement***, ***Toy Story***, ***The Santa Clause*** and ***Galaxy Quest***, just to name a few -- stars in ***Last Man Standing***, an ABC comedy airing at 8 PM (EST) on Tuesday nights. Allen plays Mike Baxter, KA0XTT, a married father of three and the director of marketing at an outdoor sporting goods store in Colorado whose life is dominated by women. While Amateur Radio has not been prominently featured in the first episodes, according to John Amodeo, NN6JA -- the producer of *Last Man Standing* -- it is a part of the show and an important part of Mike's character. The episode that will establish Mike as a radio amateur is currently scheduled to air in mid -January.

"Tim's character Mike is involved in creating the sales strategy for the store, including their catalog and Internet identity," Amodeo told the ARRL. "The store is like Bass Pro Shops or Cabelas. There is a strong self-sufficiency overtone to Mike's approach to life. Ham radio fits in the story as a means of emergency communication. It's not directly featured in the foreground story, but at the moment, it's a background element on the home set. Once I allow something to be put on the set, there's a chance the writers will feature it. Now that we have actually established Mike Baxter as KA0XTT, we can do more things featuring Amateur Radio."

To make Mike a ham, Amodeo needed Mike to have a call sign. So he contacted ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, to help him out. "In film and TV, we create fictitious telephone numbers, addresses and brands," Amodio explained. "We do this mostly to avoid being sued by real brands and to avoid complications with advertisers. As a producer and a ham, I was torn between wanting the show to be accurate and needing to keep my studios out of trouble. An accurate and positive portrayal of ham radio on TV would be a good thing." Many TV shows and movies use telephone numbers with a 555 exchange (such as 555-1212), as that exchange is not valid.

Together with Pitts, and with input from Tim Allen, Amodeo created a call sign for Mike Baxter: KA0XTT. Since the show is set in Colorado, they wanted Mike to have a call sign with a 0 in it. "We wanted a call sign that sounded real, but was not valid," Amodeo said. "The call sign is a 2×3 format with an X

Visit the Repeater online courtesy at:
http://vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3

The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 7pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+)

suffix. A call sign in this format is an experimental call sign and is not assignable to a radio amateur except in special circumstances. We especially liked the suffix, as it is a play on Tim's character from his former show, *Home Improvement*: 'ex-Tim Taylor.'"

Amodeo told the ARRL that both his studio (Fox) and ABC were "delighted to have a useable call sign. In the past, TV shows just made up some crazy call or used someone else's without permission. And because we've had so much talk about Amateur Radio here on the show, a few of my production assistants took their Technician exam." Amodeo applied to be an ARRL Volunteer Examiner so he could help administer the exams. On October 6, Amodeo and two other ARRL VEs administered the Technician exam to seven prospective hams. All seven passed, with two making perfect scores.

Since Mike Baxter is a ham, he needed a shack. So Amodeo and the set designers installed an Amateur Radio station in the corner of Mike's set office. Allen, as Baxter, uses an ICOM IC-9100 HF/6 meter/2 meter transceiver and an IC-92AD handheld transceiver, both provided to the show courtesy of ICOM America. Amodeo told the ARRL that he has plans to add vintage equipment to the shack in the future. "The radio equipment was originally intended to be used as props and set dressing items," Amodeo told the ARRL. "But since eight of the show's staff members are radio amateurs, it didn't take long before we made the radio equipment 'practical,' which is to say, actually capable of making radio calls live from the stage when we're not shooting." He said that radios will always be on and lit whenever they are shooting scenes in the office.

Pitts and ARRL News Editor S. Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA, have been working with Amodio to make sure that Amateur Radio is correctly portrayed in the show. Keane also provided ARRL and Amateur Radio-related materials that are used on the set, such as issues of ***QST***, ***NCJ*** and ***QEX***, as well as a call sign map, a ***2012 ARRL Handbook***, a 2012 ARRL calendar and various ARRL stickers (look for one on the HF rig). "We also sent fake versions of **DXCC**, **Worked All States** and **Worked All Continents** certificates, as well as a **Morse Code Proficiency Certificate**," Keane explained. "Each certificate bears the name Mike Baxter and has KA0XTT as the call sign. All the certificates have issue dates of December 25, playing upon Tim Allen's role in *The Santa Clause* movie series."

Amodeo told the ARRL that he also installed a multi-band dipole, as well as antennas for 2 meters and 70 cm. "up high, about 50 feet, inside the sound stage. The ultimate goal is to have the hams on our staff make contacts from our stage during down times."

Last Man Standing also stars Nancy Travis (***Three Men and a Baby***) as Mike's wife and Hector Elizondo (***Pretty Woman***, ***The Princess Diaries***, ***Monk***) as Mike's boss. Amodio also produced the critically acclaimed ***Sports Night*** and ***Arrested Development***.

LoTW Still Experiencing Delays, Invites Reload of Logs

Logbook of The World (LoTW) is continuing to accept and process logs, including logs from this past weekend's CQ World Wide CW Contest. Before the contest, LoTW had just about caught up with the backlog, but due to the high number of logs submitted after the contest, is once again seeing delays. As of December 1, the processing delay is at 22 hours -- down from 45 hours last week -- with approximately 830,000 QSOs in 2500 logs still waiting to be processed. If it has been more than 48 hours since you uploaded a log to LoTW and your log has not yet been processed, please upload it again. ***Remember***: Do not send entire logs that contain previously uploaded QSOs -- use the date range option when signing logs, selecting only those QSOs in a specific date range to upload to LoTW. Thanks again for your patience.

Editor's note—Delays of 24 hours have been common in the past month or so. However, all uploaded data seems to be received and processed in due time.

AMSAT Announces End of OSCAR 51 Mission

AMSAT-OSCAR 51, the popular FM repeater satellite, has likely reached the end of its operational lifespan.

AMSAT-NA Vice President of Operations, Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, issued the following statement:

"It is with a heavy heart I report that AO-51 has ceased transmission and is not responding to commands. The last telemetry data indicated that the third of six batteries was approaching failure to short, and observations indicate the voltage from three cells is insufficient to power the UHF transmitters. The IHU may continue to be operative. Initial tests with the S band transmitter were also not positive, although more attempts are in order. We have tried leaving the satellite in an expected state where if voltages climb high enough, the 435.150 transmitter may possibly be heard.

"The command team will regularly attempt communications with the satellite over the coming months (and years). There is always the possibility that a cell will open and we could once again talk to our friend while illuminated. Thanks to all who helped fund, design, build, launch, command, and operate AO-51. It's 7 year mission has been extraordinary. Please support **AMSAT's Fox-1 project**, and other AMSAT projects worldwide with your time and money."

FASTRAC-1 Satellite Digipeater Active

Beginning Friday, December 2, at 1600 UTC, the FASTRAC-1 satellite (FO-69) will be open for use as a packet radio digipeater. Anyone with a 1200 baud packet TNC and a VHF/ UHF FM transceiver will have an opportunity to try it. If you own **satellite tracking software**, you'll find the latest orbital elements on the **FASTRAC Web site**.

FASTRAC-1 receives at 145.825 MHz and transmits at 437.345 MHz. The digipeater alias is FAST1. To connect to ARRL Headquarters station W1AW through FASTRAC-1, for example, you would send the following packet:

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely

Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues --------- $20.00_____
Each Family Member -- $ 2.00_____
Student ---------- $ 5.00_____
Repeater/Autopatch donation ---_____
Call/Name badge -------- $10.00_____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues---------- $37.00_____

Total----------_____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____
DATE:_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143